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MAZADA TOURS

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MKs: Kibbutz Artzi played poor while being rich

EVELYN GORDON

THE Kibbutz Artzi movement has been transferring millions of dollars abroad at the same time it is demanding government handouts to protect it from collapse, Likud MKs charged yesterday.

MKs Michael Eitan and Ron Nahman submitted their documentation to Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair late Monday night, and asked him to delay approval of the kibbutz debt arrangement until the government receives a complete accounting of the kibbutz's assets.

Under the proposed arrangement, the government and the banks together would write off some NIS 3.9 billion worth of all kibbutz debts (not just those of the Kibbutz Artzi), with the government directly contributing some NIS 1.17-1.5b. of this sum. The kibbutzim, for their part, would sell land worth NIS 2b.

The government is slated to approve the deal today. Also today, the Knesset Finance Committee is to vote on a NIS 146.5 million bailout of Techen, the Kibbutz Artzi-owned industry at the focus of the storm.

One of the examples cited by Eitan was a deal whereby Techen paid Penninghold, a company based in the Antilles Islands, a 4 percent fee on all deals arranged between the kibbutzim and Penninghold's parent company in Holland, Phoenix.

Judge Eliahu Vinograd of the Tel Aviv District Court found that Techen and Phoenix are the same company.

Eitan also cited a 1989 deal whereby Penninghold paid a company called Zeno some \$2.27 million to buy know-how. Zeno, like Penninghold, is owned by the Kibbutz Artzi.

"Zeno's shares are held 100 percent by a trustee company in the Jersey Isles, and the beneficiaries of its deals are the secretaries of the Kibbutz Artzi," wrote Micha Rinat, an official of the movement, in a document submitted by Eitan.

In addition to Phoenix, Zeno and Penninghold, the Kibbutz Artzi has at least two other foreign subsidiaries: Tali in London and Istim in New York. The two recently tried to collect an NIS 80 million "debt" from Techen, but Vinograd stopped them.

"How is it," Eitan and Nahman asked in their letter to Ben-Yair, "that when the [debt] arrangement was made with the Kibbutz Artzi in 1989-90, and during all the years since then,

the Kibbutz Artzi never reported the existence of these overseas companies to the Kibbutz Debt Arrangement Administration?"

The Techen network is also suspected of various criminal acts, to the tune of hundreds of millions of shekels - which, according to Nahman, are now under investigation.

"From the information we have received from the Kibbutz Debt Arrangement Administration, it seems that Phoenix's activities could have entailed tax crimes, violations of the foreign currency laws and false representations to the Holland stock exchange," wrote Finance Minister Avraham Shohat to Nahman.

"The kibbutzim have assets which are worth more than their debts," Eitan concluded. Meanwhile, two Likud MKs charged yesterday that Histadrut funds were illegally used not just in the Labor primaries, but also in the 1992 Knesset elections.

Similar charges had been raised back in 1992, but MKs Michael Eitan and Limor Livnat decided the current police investigation made it more likely that they would be taken seriously. They therefore wrote to Ben-Yair and State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat on Monday, asking them to investigate the matter.

The appendices to the letters documented numerous incidents in which Labor Party figures - including Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Housing Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer and Justice Minister David Liba'i - spoke in Histadrut buildings, sometimes under Histadrut auspices.

The MKs also attached the schedule of a Histadrut conference held a few weeks before the elections, which included a lecture on the Labor Party, along with lectures on subjects such as social psychology and labor law.

Eitan said these activities violated the party funding law, which forbids all contributions from organizations, whether in cash or in any other form - in this case, the use of facilities at no charge. Livnat said the benefits totaled hundreds of thousands, and possibly millions, of shekels.

Eitan accused Transportation Minister Yisrael Kessar, who was then secretary-general of the Histadrut, of committing perjury when he told Halima the Histadrut was not involved in any electioneering activities.



Former Histadrut treasurer Artur Yisraelovich chats with a policeman at Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Yisraelovich held on grounds of 'substantial evidence' against him

RAINE MARCUS

FORMER Histadrut treasurer Artur Yisraelovich, described by police as the "inventor, initiator and organizer of the method used to embezzle Histadrut funds" was remanded yesterday for four days by the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court.

Yisraelovich is suspected of fraud, breach of trust, and falsifying invoices while he was Histadrut treasurer from 1974-1994.

National fraud squad representative Supt. Moshe Fishman presented Judge Dan Arbel with three false invoices allegedly signed by Yisraelovich while he was treasurer. He requested a 10-day remand but later settled for a four-day remand in an agreement reached with Yisraelovich's lawyer.

Arbel ruled that on Friday, Yisraelovich will be released on NIS 60,000 bail and must turn in his passport.

The Histadrut invoices were for services ordered from the Histadrut's Education and Culture Enterprises (Mifalei Tarbut V'Hinuch) and charged to different Histadrut departments, Fishman said. These departments, however, did not pay for real services, Fishman added, but for election campaign activities, including the primary campaigns, which should have been funded by the election budget.

Yisraelovich is suspected of devising this method, added Fishman, and directing others who are also under investigation to use it. Additional evidence is being gathered daily, he said, but the investigation is continuing.

In remanding Yisraelovich, Arbel said that the evidence against him is substantial.

He also ruled that for 15 days after his release, Yisraelovich will not be allowed to visit Histadrut headquarters or be in contact with its officials. However, he gave him permission to return to work at the Ports and Railways Authority.

Bill Human adds:

Police continued to press ahead yesterday with the Histadrut fraud investigation, summoning two former labor federation officials who until now have not been questioned.

Police have already interrogated over 20 former Histadrut officials and Labor Party members about the misuse of Histadrut funds in recent years.

Meir Gatt, the previous Histadrut administrative director, and Shimshon Roth, a former trade union section official, were questioned by the national fraud squad in Jaffa.

Gatt is suspected of involvement in funneling Histadrut funds to last year's reelection campaign of former Histadrut chairman Haim Haberfeld.

Histadrut officials said the questioning of Gatt came as no surprise, as his central role in the alleged wrongdoing was well known.

Police said Roth, also a close associate of Haberfeld, is not a suspect in the case, while Gatt is suspected of criminal wrongdoing.

'Rabin, Kohl discussed security cooperation'

DAVID MAKOVSKY

MUCH of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's 3½-hour meeting with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Bonn last week dealt with "several ideas and plans to expand security cooperation between the two countries" in the future, a senior Israeli official said yesterday.

According to reports, Rafael, the Israel Weapons Development Authority, is a finalist in the bidding to obtain a contract from the German Defense Ministry, to provide Bonn with laser-guided bombs. This may have been one of the issues raised by Rabin during the meeting.

Until now, it was assumed that the meeting was dedicated to a personal reconciliation in the aftermath of German press disclosures relating to the whereabouts of missing navigator Ron Arad.

German officials have also privately called for establishing more contact between German bureaucrats and Israeli officials, so Bonn can get a better understanding of which technologies Israel believes should not be sold to Iran.

Rabin's spokesman, Oded Ben-Ami, refused any comment on the issues.

One reason Rabin requested the meeting was to calm an angry Kohl, who threatened to cancel his visit here scheduled for later this spring. The German chancellor made here to the effect that Germany sought to intervene on behalf of Arad as a pretext for improving economic relations between Bonn and Teheran.

When a February 28 phone call between Rabin and Kohl was not successful in resolving differences, Kohl agreed to receive a special senior-level emissary in Bonn to smooth over hurt feelings. The emissary, whose name cannot be revealed, traveled to Germany but failed to resolve the issue.

While some believe it would have been sufficient for Rabin to make a public statement thanking Kohl for his personal efforts on Arad's behalf, the prime minister decided to meet with Kohl personally.

According to the Israeli official, Germany so far has no hard evidence that Iran knows Arad's whereabouts. Bonn believes that if Iran knew where Arad was, Teheran would hold out on releasing him in order to extract a quid pro quo from Germany. So far, this has not occurred.

Kohl and Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani have had at least two phone conversations in the last few months during which the issue of Arad was raised, according to the official. During the first conversation, Rafsanjani denied that Iran was holding Arad.

During the second conversation, Kohl asked the Iranian leader if he could check whether any of Iran's friends - alluding to Hizbullah or Iranian Revolutionary Guards in the Bekaa Valley - might be holding Arad. Rafsanjani said he would check, but later sent word that Arad's whereabouts were unknown, the Israeli official said.

Apart from top-level contact, the German authorities have made clear that Israel has been kept abreast of intelligence and sub-ministerial contacts with Iran, which Bonn terms to be part of its "critical dialogue" with Teheran.

Officials say Kohl was especially upset by the spat over Arad because Israel is enlisting Germany's assistance for three Dolphin-class submarines, dams for Jordan, intervention with the European Union on a free trade accord, and the establishment of a \$300 million civilian science research and development project to draw German investors to Israel.

Kohl's anger was exacerbated by the fact that President Ezer Weizman mishandled an invitation to Germany. While the idea of bringing Weizman to Germany was actually an Israeli diplomatic initiative, Weizman said publicly that he was not interested in coming after he had been formally invited.

For several months, he refused to set a date for his visit. The visit is now set for September.

Christopher: US has evidence Iraq making biological weapons

HILLEL KUTTLER
WASHINGTON

SECRETARY of State Warren Christopher said yesterday the US now has "strong evidence that Iraq is conducting a large program to develop biological weapons for offensive purposes."

Despite being confronted with that evidence, Iraqi officials "continue to dissemble and to lie," Christopher told an Anti-Defamation League forum here. He did not reveal what evidence the US has.

Christopher also warned Russia of the consequences of its decision to proceed on building nuclear reactors for Iran.

"Above all, no country working with Iran should work with them on nuclear matters. On this score, we've made our opposition to the Russians' cooperation with Iran abundantly clear. I'm convinced that Russia will rue the day that it provides Iran with nuclear expertise and technology," he added.

Christopher also announced officially that US peace process coordinator Dennis Ross will leave for Israel and Syria today "to help lay a strong basis for both sides to engage on what I now think is the crucial issue occupying the parties, and that is security arrangements."

Cabinet to debate Treasury's kibbutz bail-out plan

JOSE ROSENFELD

THE cabinet today will deliberate the Treasury's NIS 5.9 billion follow-up kibbutz debt arrangement, which has an agreement in principle from the kibbutzim. Treasury officials warned, however, that the route to implementation will be fraught with difficulties.

The kibbutzim will contribute about NIS 2 billion worth of land, while the banks and the government will write off NIS 3.9 billion in debt.

The actual value of the land the kibbutzim will contribute is as yet unclear, and will be determined by a professional land survey. Only then will the cabinet approve funds for implementing the arrangement as well as set the criteria that will determine the government's obligations.

Treasury officials foresee problems in getting the kibbutz movements' agreement to the detailed arrangement. Similarly, they are concerned that the movements will have difficulty in getting a legally binding commitment from each kibbutz to mutual assistance.

The Treasury already admits it has a disagreement with the kibbutzim over the interpretation of Israel Lands Administration Directive 441, which allows kibbutzim to turn agricultural land into commercial property for their business activity. According to officials, this disagreement could torpedo the whole arrangement.

The Treasury insists that 441 is limited to small tracts of land on which the kibbutz's commercial enterprises are located. "No more than 10 dunams in the country's center," said an official.

The kibbutzim, however, interpret 441 to apply to the whole area, without any limits. The Treasury claims that this would undermine the arrangement, since it would flood the real estate market and devalue the land that will finance the arrangement. "If the kibbutzim insist on this, let them finance their debt by themselves," said the official.

Also, getting the banks to agree to the arrangement as a group, as well as reaching a consensus on how to split the burden among themselves will not be easy.

The Treasury will stretch the debt arrangement to 10 years in order to give the government enough time to sell the land and use the proceeds to write off the kibbutz debt without incurring budget expenditures.

PA presents first operating budget

HILLEL KUTTLER
WASHINGTON

THE Palestinian Authority has for the first time presented to the international community an operating budget, which is seen as the basis for resolving the impasse over the slow transfer of donor funds.

The PA's 1995 budget for \$400 million projects a \$136 million deficit.

All sides agreed that the gap results primarily from the donors' pledges having not yet been submitted, Israeli officials said.

In meetings here the last two days involving PA and Israeli officials with the US and other donor countries, however, the Palestinians were criticized for not having yet established budgetary institutions. Foreign Ministry Director-General Uri Savir told Israeli reporters.

The meetings were held in advance of a major meeting of the parties in Paris on April 27.

The developments indicate that "at least now, we have found the most creative way to solve the problem of every month having a [PA] money crisis," Savir said.

Liberals echo Levy's call for assured election slots

SARAH HONIG

MK David Levy's demands to reserve slots for his faction on the next Likud slate of Knesset candidates has elicited similar demands from the former Liberals in the Likud, the *Post* learned last night.

A source close to Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu argued that "this, if anything, makes it all the more imperative for Netanyahu to stay firm and not yield to Levy's ultimatum, or he will face more of the same from the Liberals, and by that point there will be no putting the lid back on Pandora's box."

Netanyahu, who has not responded to Levy's demands to assure his faction "fair representation," vowed yesterday "not to allow the Likud back to the dark days of bitter factional infighting."

He called on Levy to end his boycott of Likud forums and join the deliberations in the party secretariat, which is hammering out a primary system for the next Likud Knesset list.

The secretariat is due to resume its discussion of the new primary system tomorrow, and the members will wait to see if Levy joins them. Levy's ultimatum to the Likud is also likely to be the focus at the Likud executive bureau session tomorrow evening.

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Northern settlements plan to hold one-day warning strike

HEADS of confrontation-line towns and villages are to stage a one-day strike of all northern settlements next Monday, to protest against what they described as the disrespect of successive governments to their plight.

The decision was made yesterday at a meeting of the forum of leaders of front-line settlements in Nabariya, in the wake of last Friday's Katyusha rocket attacks on the Galilee, in which a teenager was killed and 12 people wounded.

President Ezer Weizman, who attended the meeting, distanced himself from the remarks of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that residents in the north were more deserving of aid than those on the Golan Heights.

"It is not my duty to support or not support remarks made by the

DAVID RUDGE

prime minister," Weizman told reporters.

"I think that funds should be given here [in the north] and that the Golan should also be treated - in fact that all residents living beyond the Green Line - should be treated as Israelis," said Weizman.

"As long as there is no political decision, they have to be taken care of, protected and guarded," he said.

Weizman, however, rejected complaints from some of the participants that they were treated to visits by ministers and senior government officials during and after attacks and then forgotten.

He maintained that there was a delay between the making and implementing of pledges, but

there was no neglect and certainly no disregard.

Weizman praised the steadfastness of residents in the face of the security problems and what he described as the good relations with the IDF's Northern Command.

Most of the participants at the meeting, which was called by the chairman of the forum, Metulla Local Council head Yossi Goldberg, said there should be no differentiation between northern settlements and the Golan, and that both were part and parcel of the front line.

The heads of the confrontation-line settlements are pressing for additional budgets for education, welfare, security and development projects.

They maintained that they had been promised preferential treatment under the present government's new order of priorities, but the pledges had not been fulfilled.

Nahariya Mayor Jackie Sabag, who called for the one-day strike to press their complaints, said they were fed up with verbal promises and wanted deeds.

Interior Minister Uzi Baram, who met with the local council heads at Kibbutz Kfar Blum last night, called on them not to go ahead with the threatened one-day strike.

He promised to arrange a meeting between them and Rabin next week to try and resolve outstanding problems.

Meanwhile, the situation north of the border was relatively calm yesterday.



Tourism Minister Uzi Baram (left) and Jordan Tourism Minister Abdullah Khatib shake hands yesterday after signing the first agreement regulating ties under the peace treaty. (Yisrael Hadani)

Jordan, Israel sign tourism agreement

AMMAN (Reuters) - Jordan and Israel signed an agreement on tourism yesterday, the first accord to regulate bilateral ties under the October 26 peace treaty.

Jordan Tourism Minister Abdullah Khatib and counterpart Uzi Baram signed the accord at a ceremony in a state guest house in the Jordan Valley.

Their undersecretaries had initiated the pact on February 9. The accord calls for broad coordination, including marketing joint tour packages abroad, exchanging information, and cooperation between the two national airlines, officials said.

It also calls for setting up a joint tourism committee of the private and public sectors to meet once a year.

The agreement is the first in a series of accords covering everything from trade to security and ener-

gy that are to be signed by August.

More than 20,000 Israelis have visited Jordan since the border was opened in November, touring the ancient Nabatean city of Petra and Mount Nebo, traditional burial site of Moses.

But only several hundred Jordanians have visited Israel, mainly because of lingering animosity as well as Israeli security precautions before issuing visas.

Many Jordanians are of Palestinian origin and have relatives living in Israel, Judea and Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

The two countries are expected to revise an interim agreement on border crossings on May 1.

Under temporary arrangements, Amman agreed to daily entry limits of 600 Israelis at the northern Sheikh Hussein bridge, and 300 at the Wadi Araba crossing. Israeli tour operators threatened to boycott Jordan if it did not allow in more tourists.

Tel Aviv Holocaust artifacts auction canceled

HERB KEINON

A SALE of Holocaust artifacts by a Tel Aviv auction house was canceled yesterday, following a public furor that began over the planned auction of a bar of soap that was claimed - erroneously - to have been made from bodies of Holocaust victims.

Moshe Mardik, the owner of the Zodiak Stamp auction house, told Israel Radio that he decided to cancel the auction because "we take into account the sensitivities of the public. Our auction house is respectable, and I will not let this hurt our reputation."

Mardik said that auctions of Holocaust artifacts have been going on for years in the United States, Europe and in Israel.

Mardik said that the soap was returned to its owner, Moshe Yablon, and that other items up for sale - such as yellow Stars of David and dog-tags from concentration camps - will also

be returned to their owners.

Holocaust scholars have maintained for years that the Nazis never made soap from their victims, but that the threat of making such soap was a form of psychological warfare used on Jews in the concentration camps. Since the war, many people have continued to believe that such soap exists.

Tel Aviv police, which began an investigation of the auction, called it off after the auction was canceled.

Yablon, who offered the soap and other Holocaust-related items for sale, said he received permission from Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau to sell the soap. Yablon, who said he is destitute after serving a jail sentence on "trumped-up rape charges," said he received

the items from his father, a Buchenwald survivor.

Lau, himself a Holocaust survivor, said he never told Yablon he could sell the soap, but rather that it should be checked and either buried or given to Yad Vashem for proper documentation.

Lau said he told Yablon he would help him find someone who would buy the other Holocaust items on condition that they then be donated to Yad Vashem as a way "to deny those who deny the Holocaust."

The Yad Vashem directorate, meanwhile, "expressed shock on discovering that Holocaust artifacts are to be sold by way of public auction."

Yad Vashem called on survivors and their families to hand over any artifacts in their possession to the Yad Vashem archives.

Lawyer fired after criticizing Arafat

JON IMMANUEL

RAJI Sourani, the leading human rights lawyer in Gaza, has been fired from his job at the Gaza Center for Rights and Law, after criticizing Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's violations of law and civil rights.

Other Palestinian human rights groups condemned the dismissal. Hassan Ashrawi, director of the Commission for Citizens' Rights said, "It sends a message to all human rights organizations. There is an attempt at silencing and intimidation."

The center's four-man board of directors which dismissed Sourani said the decision was taken for "professional reasons," that had been spelled out in a letter to him.

Sourani said, however, that the letter did not clarify the reasons. "I think they didn't like what our center was doing," he said.

Sourani was arrested for a day in February after publishing a statement criticizing Arafat for setting up security courts, which Sourani said violated Arafat's commitments to uphold law and human rights. He also claimed that political activists were arrested solely because of their party affiliation.

Ashrawi said that she had no proof Sourani's dismissal was ordered by Arafat, but added there had been "a smear campaign" against human rights activists that claimed they were "financed from abroad and were foreign agents."

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

The weekly meeting of the English-speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place at 1:00 p.m. today, at the YMCA, King David St. Dr. Shlomo Chiche will speak on *Traditional Chinese Cuisine*.

PA police: 'Engineer' wasn't killed

JON IMMANUEL

YEHIA Ayyash, known as "the Engineer" because of the bombs he constructed for several suicide attacks against Israelis, was probably not among the Hamas bomb-makers killed Sunday in the explosion in Gaza.

Gaza police chief Brig. Ghazi Jarab told reporters yesterday he never saw Ayyash and may have been the unidentified body found near the explosion, but only that all possibilities were being checked.

"Yehia Ayyash, the engineer, was not in the apartment," Jabali said.

Al-Wakeel, the Hamas weekly,

distributed two days early yesterday, said that all six bodies had been identified.

Speculation that Ayyash may have been killed arose because of Israeli claims he was the first to enter Gaza when the Israeli security services pursued him, and that a Hamas bomb-factory was a likely place for him to be.

There were broad differences among the police forces about how many people were killed. Numbers ranged from five to nine because so many bodies

were blown apart.

According to a neighbor, only the body of a small child remained intact.

The presence of the factory has embarrassed the Palestinian Authority, which claimed there had been no evidence that bombs used in suicide missions originated in Gaza. It has also embarrassed Hamas, which sought to deny that there was any bomb factory in a residential neighborhood.

Israel Radio quoted police

sources as saying three people left the building a few minutes before the explosion, and speculated the elusive Ayyash may have been among them.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Police yesterday turned over the truck that rammed into an IDF jeep in Gaza last week, killing one Border Police officer and one policeman.

Israeli security services believe it was an attack, while the Palestinians claim it was an accident.

The truck will now be examined by Shimshon District police.

Non-Jewish youth buried at Kfar Masaryk

GYORGY Yafritzky, the 14-year-old Tirat Carmel boy who died on Shabbat and was refused burial in Haifa by both Jewish and Christian cemetery officials, was buried yesterday afternoon in Kibbutz Kfar Masaryk in the Haifa Bay area.

The boy died several days after an operation to remove a cancerous growth from his head. His parents donated his lungs, kidneys and corneas for transplant.

However, Jewish cemeteries in the area refused to bury him because his mother isn't Jewish, rendering him a non-Jew. But Christian cemeteries also refused to bury him, claiming they are short of space.

The parents turned to private agencies for help in finding a burial plot, and the burial was arranged at Kfar Masaryk. A reform rabbi arrived at the kibbutz cemetery to perform the funeral service, but the parents asked him to leave and insisted that a priest

conduct the ceremony.

The funeral was conducted by Father Daniel Ruelsen, who has helped several non-Jewish immigrants in the North make burial arrangements.

Elihu Scharf, the secretary of Kfar Masaryk, said, "We did it for free, because it's a mitzva. We are not bothered by the religious issue. We are talking about citizens with a problem that must be resolved."

Meanwhile, the National Insurance Institute has decided it will finance the transportation for burial of bodies of non-Jewish immigrants whose families can only find plots far from their homes. The cost of this transportation, which can run into the hundreds of shekels, has until now been paid by the families.

The NII made the decision in response to a query on the matter by the Association of Civil Rights in Israel. (Iim)

Election teams meet in Jericho

JON IMMANUEL

PALESTINIAN and Israeli election teams met in Jericho yesterday for five hours to deal with voters' lists and voting districts, with both sides coming away feeling that progress was made.

Foreign Ministry legal adviser Yoel Singer, heading the Israeli team, said he "transferred serial photographs of the Judea/Samaria area so they can prepare maps of polling areas," and a population registry to help the Palestinians form voter registration lists.

Palestinian Authority Minister of Local Government Affairs Saeb Erekat, heading the Palestinian team, said that 1,159,000 names of people aged 17 or over appeared in the registry of Palestinians.

"Now we have found out that there are 45 percent to 50 percent errors so we need a canvass," he said.

He called it a canvass rather than a census, as it would involve checking identity cards, rather than carefully measuring population figures. Erekat did not dispute the numbers, but noted that many names were incorrect, including his own. "My name in Hebrew reads as Diab," he said.

Both sides saw July 1 as a realistic target date for completion of the talks.

CLARIFICATION

On March 17 *The Jerusalem Post* printed an article about the Ben-David family in Belgium based on a statement issued by the Tel Aviv police, which turned out to be incorrect and misleading. Contrary to the police statement, Shlomo and David Ben-David were released without bail by Belgian police. According to their lawyer in Israel, no connection was found between Shlomo and David Ben-David and a container of 650 kilograms of cocaine. There is also no proof that the Ben-David family is involved in criminal offenses. The *Jerusalem Post* regrets the anguish it may have inadvertently caused the family.

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GOLDEN AGE SUPPLEMENT

The Jerusalem Post will publish a special "Golden Age" supplement in May, 1995. The supplement will appear together with both the local and the international editions of The Jerusalem Post.

All those interested in placing ads in the supplement should contact

Smadar Ratinsky, Tel. 03-6390333, Fax. 03-6390277.

Ohr Torah Institutions

You are invited to attend the Shabbat Hagadol Lecture (in English) by

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

which will take place at Hechal Shlomo, 58 King George St., Jerusalem on Saturday night, April 8 at 9:00 p.m.

Topic:

"Who is a Jew? Who is an Israeli? Laws of Conversion and the Pessah Seder: Theological and Halakic Ramifications for Today"

בנין האמת

In very deep sorrow, we announce the untimely death of our dear

Reb YA'ACOV PINHAS (Jacky) GOTTLIEB

Son of Reb Natan ז"ל

The funeral took place yesterday, Tuesday, April 4, 1995 (4 Nissan 5755) at Nahlat Yitzhak Cemetery.

Mourners:

Mother, Rachel Tiberg-Gottlieb
Wife, Batya Gruenwald-Gottlieb
Daughters, Efrat, Keren and Netta Gottlieb
Brothers and sisters, Philip Gottlieb-Werhaft and family
Willi Gottlieb and family
Charlie Gottlieb and family
Marcelle Gottlieb and family
Almée Gottlieb-Brot and family

and all the family in Israel and Antwerp

Shiva at the home of the deceased in Antwerp, Belgium.

מזמן האחרון

BUY AND WIN
PESSACH AT



Israel sign agreement

NEWS IN BRIEF

...to be elected by boarder
...peace board
...sex scandal

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...1995
...1995
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Phlomo Riskin

...1995
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מכרזי התשלום

'All youths on trial should have lawyers'

HAINE MARCUS

ALL juvenile defendants should be entitled to legal representation in court regardless of crimes committed and financial means, Defense for Children International concluded Monday, following a conference here attended by 38 lawyers and judges from around the world.

At present, judges here are not obliged to appoint lawyers for juvenile defendants unless the crime carries a 10-year prison sentence.

According to DCI legal adviser Yair Ronen, a juvenile cannot get a fair trial unless he has legal representation.

"A minor may confess to crimes because of pressure by po-

lice and a lawyer may save him from being convicted of offenses he did not commit," said Ronen.

According to Ronen, juvenile lawyers specialize in youth advocacy, developmental psychology, and understand international law.

DCI also aims to involve the family in the decision-making process and promote the "voice of the child" to assist in his rehabilitation after sentencing.

Conditions in lock-ups and prisons should be upgraded in accordance with international minimal standards, said Ronen, and should be open to nongovernmental monitors and supervision.

Burundi Army: Only 20 known dead in attack

PETER SMERDON
BUJUMBURA

BURUNDI'S army said yesterday it knew of only 20 deaths from a reported massacre of 400 Hutu tribespeople but said it was hunting for the attackers.

"There were around 20 dead but I don't yet have the definitive toll," Lieutenant-Colonel Jean-Bosco Daradagwe said after diplomats and aid workers said some 400 people, mostly women and children, had been massacred in the northeast.

"Whoever put forward a toll of 400 did not verify his information," Daradagwe said.

The United Nations said in Geneva it had unconfirmed reports of mass killings in two other villages in the east of Burundi.

The UN refugee agency called on Burundi's government to provide better protection for Rwandan refugees living in camps, and appealed to Tanzania to reopen

its border, slammed shut on Friday after an exodus of 50,000 Rwandans from northern Burundi.

Tanzania said yesterday it was sticking to its decision. Burundi has long teetered on the brink of killings on the scale of Rwanda, where up to a million Tutsis and Hutu moderates were massacred last year by Hutu troops and militiamen.

Daradagwe said troops were hunting for gunmen in Gasorwe where aid workers and diplomats said the 400 Hutus were killed after being taken hostage last week.

He said Burundi's army, dominated by the Tutsi minority, had been hunting Hutu gunmen of the Palipehutu movement. He said there were fatalities among guerrillas and civilians taken hostage by gunmen in clashes with

troops and that the gunmen wanted to move south from Muyinga province to Karuzi.

"We can fully expect Hutu gunmen to retaliate as soon as possible for this massacre," a Western diplomat said. "They are not a highly-organized guerrilla force but can hit back."

The massacres around Gasorwe apparently prompted the exodus of 50,000 Rwandan refugees who headed for Tanzania until the border was closed. The Rwandans were among hundreds of thousands of Hutus who fled ethnic violence at home last year.

A Western diplomat told Reuters the Gasorwe killings were clearly a massacre. He said

he saw a year-old Hutu girl who had been bayoneted in her genitals so she would never bear children.

"There is no question this is genocide," he said.

Four wounded survivors - all children - were in the intensive care unit at the government-run hospital in Muyinga on Monday. Some had been shot, others slashed and some stoned.

An 11-year-old boy was shot in the right cheek, with the bullet exiting near his left eye. Doctors said it was a miracle he had survived but said he would lose sight in the eye.

A 14-year-old Hutu boy lay in a coma and relatives said his head had been bashed in by a Tutsi with a rock.

A woman, breastfeeding her baby on a hospital bed, had a vicious machete wound across

the back of her skull and neck. Gasorwe township, 22 km west of Tanzania, resembled a ghost town with streets deserted and shops closed.

Asked about the killings, US Ambassador Robert Krueger, who visited Muyinga Hospital and saw the survivors on Saturday, said the vast majority of victims were women and children.

"It is a horrendous massacre," he added. "These aren't just people caught up in the crossfire."

He said he knew of no official investigation into the killings and said parents of the children had told him the attackers were Burundian soldiers.

He later told reporters he believed more than 400 were killed. A foreign aid worker also said he estimated more than 400 were slaughtered by Burundian troops and Tutsi gunmen.

Ministry issues annual pre-Pessah warning on dangers to children

JUDY SIEGEL

THE two weeks preceding Pessah, when children are out of school and parents are busy cleaning the house, pose the year's highest risks for accidental poisonings.

The Health Ministry and various doctors are warning the public to be especially careful and keep cleaning products out of the reach of youngsters.

Dr. Uri Teitelman, head of the National Poison Control Center in Haifa's Rambam Hospital, said all cleaning materials should be stored in a locked closet and far from children. Never mix cleaning products, as they can produce noxious gases that damage the lungs irreversibly. It is forbidden to mix products with active chlorine (such as bleach) with acidic materials of any kind, or chlorine with ammonia.

Keep cleaning materials in their original containers, and never store them in used food containers, because unknowingly someone may eat or drink them.

Keep children away from hot water used for making leaven dishes

kosher for Pessah. Never leave a bucket with even a few centimeters of water within the reach of small children; babies have been known to drown in such circumstances. Teitelman recommended airing out rooms after cleaning them with chemicals if the weather permits.

Dr. Yona Amitai, toxicological adviser to the Hadassah-University Hospital on Mt. Scopus in Jerusalem, said children under the age of five are most likely to be accidentally poisoned before Pessah.

In the event that a child has drunk kerosene or cleaning materials, give him water or milk to drink to dilute the chemicals in the stomach. Don't force the child to drink, however, and don't make him vomit under any circumstances, said Amitai. The corrosive nature of most cleaning products can cause additional damage to the esophagus if they're regurgitated.

Seek medical help immediately. Doctors (and parents, in an emergency) can call the National Poison Control Center at 04-529205.

Sheba fund-raiser to feature Oscar de la Renta

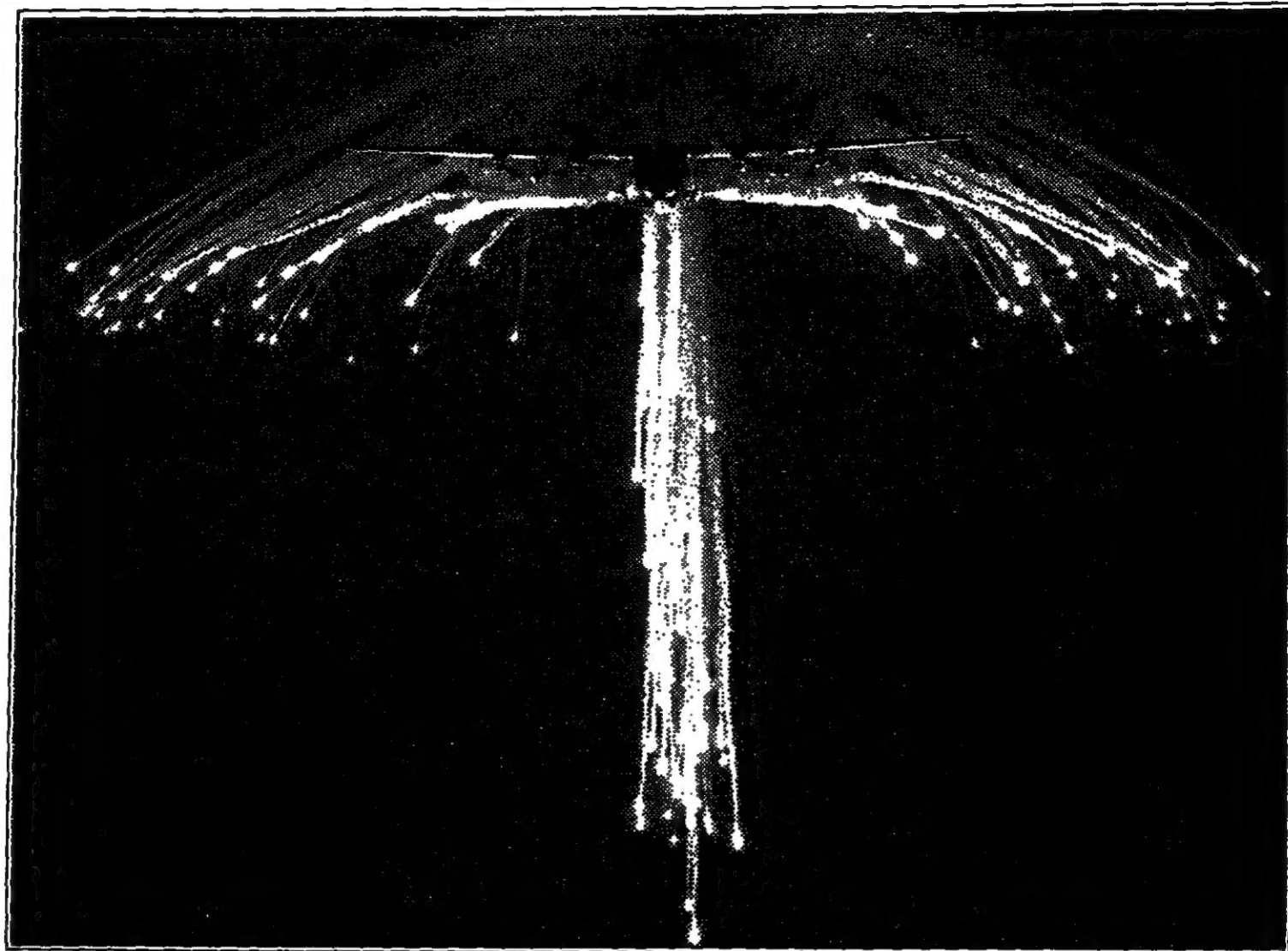
JUDY SIEGEL

SHEBA Hospital hopes to raise NIS 500,000 from an unprecedented May 1 gala in the El Al hangar at Ben-Gurion Airport with food, dancing, and fashions by the famous designer Oscar de la Renta.

The designer has invited his personal friend, Queen Noor of Jordan to attend. She has promised to give her answer in a few days.

The event, in which de la Renta will personally take part along with his team of models and winter '96 fashions will be held under the patronage of Lea Rabin, president of Friends of Sheba Hospital. Only 1,000 tickets will be sold - at NIS 500 apiece. The proceeds will benefit the Tel Hashomer hospital's pediatrics and urology departments.

The designer, a "close friend" of Rabin, according to hospital sources, will spend five days in Israel to mark Independence Day. He will then fly to Jordan as Queen Noor's guest, to Paris and then back to the US.



An Australian Air Force C-130 Hercules transport yesterday tests infrared counter-measures, part of its electronic warfare self-protection system, over the coast of South Australia. (Reuters)

Major: War in Bosnia could escalate into wider conflict

WASHINGTON (AP) - Renewed fighting in Bosnia is relatively minor now but could break out into wider conflict, increasing pressure on Western allies to find a peace settlement, British Prime Minister John Major says.

Continuing top-level meetings in Washington yesterday, including a working lunch with President Clinton, Major is focusing on the Balkan conflict as an area in which US-British cooperation is essential.

On Monday, he underscored Britain's agreement with the United States on continuing the arms embargo over Bosnia and pressed congressional leaders not to force a change in administra-

tion policy.

Major said the United States and Britain will continue their efforts to gain a peace settlement in Bosnia and he played down the severity of the most recent military clashes between Bosnian government and Serb forces.

"For the moment, what's happening I think is that the Bosnians are engaged in fairly light military actions and the Serbs are responding," said Major, whose country maintains peacekeeping forces in the region. "Clearly that's very unhelpful. At the moment they're relatively minor matters, but they could certainly worsen and I think we must try and ensure that they don't."

Japanese doomsday cult had current to power a factory

TOKYO (AP) - The mysterious "Science Ministry" of the doomsday cult suspected in Tokyo's nerve gas attack used electricity powerful enough to run a factory, Japanese media reported yesterday.

The report on the NHK television network detailed the latest bit of unsettling evidence unearthed in two weeks of raids at compounds belonging to the Aum Shinri Kyo sect, whose name means Sublime Truth.

The sect has denied involvement in the March 20 attacks, which killed 11 people and left 5,500 others ill.

Police already have seized tons of chemicals reported necessary to make the deadly nerve gas sarin used in the attacks, as well as sophisticated scientific equipment and other materials from the

maze-like "Science Ministry" at the cult's compound in Kamikui-shiki at the foot of Mount Fuji.

National newspapers have reported that police seized ingredients that could produce enough sarin to kill millions of people, and that the cult also may have been working on biological and nuclear weapons.

The NHK report said investigators found a large chemical production chamber in the building and would examine records of the building's power usage to watch for patterns that might indicate sarin production. Police declined to comment on the report.

NHK said the building used electricity at power levels up to 6,600 volts, roughly the same as in a medium-size factory. Outlets in ordinary Japanese homes deliver 100 volts.

Filipino bandits raid town, kill 100

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AP) - About 200 heavily armed bandits ransacked this southern Philippine town yesterday, robbing banks and stores and battling troops flown in to quell the insurgency. About 100 people were killed.

President Fidel Ramos ordered police and soldiers flown in by helicopter to "shoot to kill" the raiders, believed to belong to Abu Sayyaf, a Moslem extremist group blamed for numerous ransom kidnappings and bombings in the southern Philippines.

Ramos also declared a state of emergency in Ipal, a town of 50,000 people about 760 km south of Manila. He placed troops on the entire southern island of Mindanao on alert.

The gunmen arrived in boats, two buses and a truck, and some were waiting in position when the signal was given for them to raid four of the town's seven banks simultaneously at midday, witnesses, radio reports and the military said.

They also ransacked at least one department store and set many buildings on fire to confuse police and soldiers, said military spokesman Maj. Fredesvindo Covarrubias.

In addition to the 100 people killed, he said, another 30 were wounded as the attack turned Ipal into a virtual battlefield. Radio reports said that in late afternoon, thick smoke from burning buildings was blanketing the town.

A local military commander said he sent armored personnel carriers after the bandits, who had holed up inside the compound of the public works office. After 30 minutes of heavy fighting, the bandits fled toward a nearby forest, said the commander, Col. Roberto Santiago.

It was not immediately known how many, if any, of the casualties were raiders.

Ukraine gov't dismissed

KIEV (Reuters) - President Leonid Kuchma challenged Ukrainians yesterday to moderate their country by pursuing the market reforms he had launched and the government he had frequently criticized was sacked by a discontented parliament.

Minutes before Kuchma's landmark speech, deputies threw out the government in an overwhelming vote of no confidence. Close advisers to the president said he would seize the opportunity to create a team capable of proceeding with change.

It was the first time since independence that a government had been thrown out on a confidence vote. The new administration will be Ukraine's fifth of the post-Soviet era.

Man charged for attacking Page of Led Zeppelin

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. (AP) - A former Led Zeppelin fan who now calls the band's music "satanic" was arrested for allegedly trying to stab guitarist Jimmy Page.

Four people, including two attending the concert, suffered minor cuts when Lance Alworth Cunningham slashed at them with a pocket knife as he dropped onto the floor behind the stage, police said.

"He said he was going to 'off Jimmy Page,'" police Chief John Dalton said.

Page, who was playing during the Page-Robert Plant concert, was unaware of what was happening about 15 meters away, police said. The attacker was subdued by employees and a stage hand.

NEWS FLASH

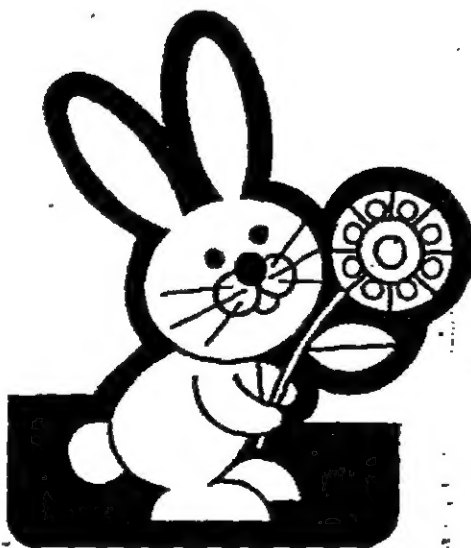
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... of the attack ...

Filipino bandits raid town kill 10

ZAMBANGIA, Philippines — About 500 heavily armed bandits raided this southern town yesterday, robbing stores and burning over a dozen houses, killing 10 people and wounding 15.

President Fidel V. Ramos said the attack was part of a campaign by the bandits to terrorize the population and force the government to withdraw troops from the area.

The bandits also looted a police station and a bank, and carried off a large amount of cash and gold.

The attack came in the second day of a series of raids in the area, which has been plagued by bandit activity for months.

... of the attack ...

Ukraine dismissed

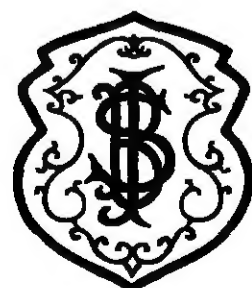
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Rabin's epithets

VISITING the shell-shocked northern towns yesterday, President Ezer Weizman again displayed the kind of statesmanship Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin seems incapable of mastering. Following a similar visit last week, Rabin promised aid for the Galilee towns at the expense of Golan communities. Weizman made it clear that discriminating against Israelis across the Green Line is unconscionable.

Encouragingly, the Galilee residents who bear the brunt of the Katyusha attacks, wholeheartedly agreed with Weizman. Seemingly to have a better understanding than the prime minister both of Israel's strategic position and the danger of internal divisiveness, they declared that they consider Golan residents no less in the "confrontation line" than the targets of last week's bombardment.

It is not easy to understand what prompts Rabin to make such gratuitous, disparaging statements about Israeli citizens. When his targets were residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza, some observers speculated that his impetuous vulgarities stemmed from his identifying settlers with the Likud opposition, for which he has been harboring irrational hostility since pre-state days. But the Golan settlers are mostly Labor Party members. That they are strenuously campaigning against the government's intention to relinquish the Heights is hardly reason to

treat them as second-class citizens.

The only possible explanation for Rabin's indiscriminate outbursts - of which the most offensive was his calling the Likud a Hamas and Islamic Jihad accomplice - is that he suffers from intolerable frustration. Contrary to his expectations, the agreement with the Palestinians has caused an increase in terrorist activity and no sign of change in the Palestinians' anti-Israel stance. The Syrians, too, seem as intransigent as they have ever been, despite optimistic noises from Washington about the Israel-Syria ambassadors' talks.

Yet the very fact that Rabin feels pressured by these developments is an indication of his realistic approach. His dilemmas are all too real. He could have succumbed to the calls from his left wing - yesterday endorsed by Secretary of State Warren Christopher - to evacuate the Arab population centers in the territories and gamble on the consequences. Instead, he insists that first the Palestinian Authority's efforts to combat terrorism must become far more substantial than they are. Clearly, the prospect of having more Gazans in the neighborhood - this time on the outskirts of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem - gives him pause.

Rabin's hesitancy and trepidation are indeed warranted by developments. Unfortunately, they also breed uncontrollable frustration and thoughtless epithets.

Bloodshed in Burundi

THE explosion of ethnic violence in Burundi has surprised no one - there have been gloomy predictions since the collapse of neighboring Rwanda, where a million people were massacred last year and another million fled as refugees. Burundi has been hovering on the brink of similar killings and it is all the more depressing that Africa and the world were unable to prevent a repeat performance.

The only logical solution to the centuries-old antagonism between the Tutsi and Hutu tribes would be for each group to have a separate homeland in the area occupied by the two existing states. It has been obvious for decades that many of the arbitrary borders drawn by the former colonial powers in Africa are virtually meaningless, especially where they slice large traditional ethnic communities into segments.

Rwanda and Burundi are particularly illogical creations - an analogy in Europe would be if "France" were half French and half Italian and "Italy" were the same. The only sensible solution would be to redraw the borders. Unfortunately, such ideas are no more than wishful thinking.

The decline of the post-colonial state is creeping across Africa - Somalia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire and several others have all but ceased to exist except as

figments of geographers' and UN officials' imaginations. Those who are paying the price are not the "leaders", increasingly isolated in remote palaces or foreign hotels, but the vast streams of refugees fleeing out from ethnic explosions that are as primitive and violent as those of the barbarian tribes who destroyed Rome without even realizing they had defeated an empire.

Television pictures of African gunmen who believe they can become invisible if someone fires at them are slowly spreading an awful truth. There may be nothing that can be done to bring into the 20th century most of a continent that largely has been denied any sort of education for two generations by its greedy and inept leaders. Any aid that Burundi may now get will be Band Aid, sent and distributed only by dedicated charity organizations motivated by Mother Theresa-style altruism. The prospects are remote indeed that any democratic state in the West, mindful of voter disillusion and donor fatigue, is going to step in again and try to save Burundi after the fiasco in Liberia, Somalia, Angola and Rwanda. And if neighboring Tanzania has slammed its borders shut to Burundi's refugees, who in Africa is going to persuade the rest of the world to open its doors, or its bank accounts, to save that wretched country?

NEIR KORNBLIT



Odd deal on Lebanon

MOSHE ZAK

AFTER the signing of the Oslo agreement, many people fantasized that Yasser Arafat would curb Hamas and Islamic Jihad terror attacks in Israel. Now there seems to be a growing opinion that the cats in Damascus and Gaza can be trusted to guard the Israeli milk from the rats of Islamic terror.

But Arafat isn't about to defend Israel from Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. And Hafez Assad isn't about to defend Israel's northern settlements from the Hizbullah.

The IDF certainly isn't basing its defense of Israel's personal security on any such mistaken concept. But the view seems to be spreading that giving up the Golan Heights to Syria will reduce tension on the Lebanese border, that Syria will restrain Hizbullah from attacking Galilee settlements from across the border.

Everybody knows that Arafat cannot eliminate Palestinian terror. He will not engage in an armed confrontation with the fundamentalist groups; the most he can do is make use of Israeli pressure on him to persuade the fundamentalist leaders to agree to a temporary cease-fire to get their members released from Israeli jails. This explains why there have been fewer terror attacks recently.

Of course, this cease-fire is far from being any guarantee of a permanent end to Palestinian terror. It is a limited tactical step which the terrorist groups feel they can live with until their

members are at liberty.

Nor could one rely on Syria's promise to the Americans that (on a temporary and limited basis) Hizbullah would not shell Israeli settlements.

AFTER OSLO, the Palestinians promised to oppose terror because they wanted immediate Israeli recognition of the PLO. But once they got their foothold in Gaza, they were in no hurry to fulfill their promise.

The Syrians, similarly, want US and Israeli recognition of their rule in Lebanon. That is why they promised the Americans, verbally, that Hizbullah would not attack civilian targets in Galilee, in exchange for an Israeli undertaking not to attack civilian targets north of the Israeli security zone.

This promise didn't stop last Friday's Katyusha attacks on Kiryat Simona and Nahariya. Damascus told Washington that its understandings with the US were still in force.

But why should Syria end these understandings? They provide a cloak of legitimacy for its illegal rule in Lebanon, and haven't prevented 50 attempted terrorist attacks over the last month against the IDF and its allies in the security zone.

Pie-crust promises like these suit the tactics of the Syrians' partners in Lebanon, whose priorities in the war against Israel are, first, to kick Israel out of the security zone by a war of attrition, and then to settle down to a war against the Galilee settlements.

The only thing Assad's understandings with the US will achieve is to give Assad a bonus - dominion over southern Lebanon - in addition to the Golan Heights.

And what will happen then to Assad's undertaking to restrain Hizbullah terror directed at Galilee? In a strange deal with Israel, the Syrians will be able to advance to the Israel-Lebanon border, while Israel will have to retreat from its positions overlooking Damascus.

Of course Israel wants to see an end to the hostile operations on its northern border. But the deal looming over the horizon is a bad one. It will neither usher in peace nor prevent terrorism.

It will do only one thing: foster the dangerous illusion that the Syrian army will protect Israel from Katyusha rockets in the long term.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on current affairs.

Neither Arafat nor Assad will help Israel combat fundamentalist terror

Nuclear threat: the facts

EPHRAIM KAHANA

ON April 17, the 171 signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty will convene in New York to decide how, and for how long, to extend the treaty. The debate is expected to be stormy.

The Clinton administration has voiced clear support for an unconditional and indefinite extension of the treaty without any amendments, and there is broad agreement among the other four nuclear powers - Russia, Britain, France and China - that opening up the treaty to amendments now could lead to turmoil.

Most Western states favor a permanent treaty. Germany, Italy, Japan and Sweden, all of whom were originally major opponents of unconditional and indefinite extension, have been assured access to nuclear energy technology for peaceful purposes, and, in return, have pledged not to acquire nuclear weapons themselves.

Opposition to indefinite extension comes mainly from Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico and Nigeria, who are impatient with the pace of disarmament set by the five declared nuclear powers.

Egypt has linked the Israeli nuclear option to the equation, charging that Israel has received substantial assistance from some nuclear-weapon states in developing its alleged nuclear weapons program. Egypt has conditioned its readiness to support the extension of the treaty on Israel's signing.

Most of the nonnuclear weapon states wish to hold the extension of the NPT hostage to the fulfillment of other arms-control measures. For these states, the nonproliferation demand by nuclear weapon states is a case of "Do as we say, not as we do."

There are three likely outcomes of the Extension Conference, which will end on May 12. The first is indefinite extension of the NPT by majority vote. A bare majority could seriously un-

dermine the treaty's effectiveness. The second possibility is a compromise on the series of fixed-period extensions.

The worst-case scenario, which becomes more likely if bloody-mindedness wins the day, is that the treaty will not be extended at all.

To remove discriminatory feelings, the US is proposing to negotiate a comprehensive test ban treaty, though this is seen merely as a tactical move.

Much ado over a toothless treaty

Even if the NPT is extended unconditionally and indefinitely, it will remain toothless. To prove effective against nuclear ambitions by terror-supporting countries like Iran, North Korea, Libya and Iraq, the treaty should be amended to include a clause permitting IAEA supervisors to visit "any time and any place" where a nuclear weapons manufacturing plant is suspected to exist. Adding such a clause, however, would increase the chances of the NPT collapsing.

One school of pro-proliferationists or selectivists believes that nuclear weapons possession by key states would have a stabilizing effect. But instead of applying sanctions against any new nuclear state or dissuading states from taking the nuclear path, it seems more important to deal with each case on its own merits.

The discovery, after the allied victory in the Gulf war, of just how close Saddam Hussein's regime had been to acquiring nuclear weapons - despite Iraq being an NPT signatory - sounded alarm bells in the world community.

The pro-proliferationists have proposed a preemptive counter-

proliferation measure - by force, if necessary - against such regimes only. But in the short history of this measure (which has existed since World War II), results have been very meager.

Six instances are on record: the Allied bombing of the Nazi heavy-water plant in Norway; the US bombing of the Japanese nuclear laboratories during World War II; the Iranian Air Force's unsuccessful bombing of Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor during the first week of the Iran-Iraq war; and Israel's bombing and destruction of the Iraqi reactor without the equipment being damaged. There is also Iraq's bombing and destruction of the Iranian Bushehr reactor, and the partial destruction of Iraq's nonconventional capability by the American-led coalition in the Gulf war.

An alternative approach could be blocking the supply of nuclear technology - but here there are many problems. For example, membership in the Nuclear Suppliers' Group is far from inclusive. Some countries that should be members, like Brazil, China and India, do not belong. An additional problem is that much of the equipment used to manufacture nuclear weapons components is in the category of dual-use technology. Nuclear aspirants, moreover, can often make their own weapons without outside help.

Several countries, which have conducted private surveys through their embassies, report that around 90 countries are likely to vote in favor of extending the NPT indefinitely.

Unfortunately, however, unconditional and indefinite extension of the treaty will not guarantee the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

The writer is a lecturer in international relations in the national security program at the University of Haifa

No fun on-line

HOWARD KURTZ

IN an age when every magazine from *Vibe* to *Car* and *Driver* seems to be trumpeting its appearance on-line, a basic question remains: Is this stuff any better than glossy paper?

The short answer is no. At least not yet.

One can glimpse the outlines of what may be an exciting, interactive future. But at the moment, it's comparable to ordering a pizza through the Internet: It may be technologically possible, but the living-room phone is a heckuva lot easier.

"No one ever reads a second *Time* cover story on-line," says Philip Elmer-DeWitt, a *Time* senior editor. "Just reading one is enough to convince you it's no fun. When you go on-line, you basically throw away 400 years of typography - all the stuff we've learned since Gutenberg to make information jump off the page."

The on-line revolution, it seems, is roughly comparable to the state of television in 1951. You can watch *I Love Lucy* and *Beat the Clock* in black-and-white, but there's no pro football, let alone slow-motion instant replay.

In those pioneering days, television was basically radio with pictures. Today's on-line offerings, in most cases, are magazines with very few pictures. They are bound to seem rather primitive just a few years from now.

To be sure, it's fun to bounce around from the *New Republic* to *Washingtonian* to *Entertainment Weekly*, checking out the head-

The hyperspace newsstand is mostly a pain in the neck

lines and skimming a few stories. But to sit at your workstation and read lengthy articles for half an hour is hard work.

That's because most on-line magazines (and newspapers) are largely text-based operations. You choose among various icons, menus and headlines, but you wind up with a lot of words. Most hard-copy readers take for granted the way photos and graphics break up the monotony of gray type.

TIME, WHICH is on America Online, has joined a slew of magazines on the much-publicized World Wide Web, a sort of hyperspace newsstand. But when you dial the Web, sometimes it rings and rings. Other times the line is busy.

By the time you get on the Web, you could have gone down to the corner, bought a copy of *Time*, picked up the dry cleaning, eaten a hot dog, read the magazine and tossed it in the recycling bin.

Subscribers are looking at *Time* on America Online more than 90,000 times a week, and 50,000 times at *U.S. News*. Despite earlier fears, magazine executives say the on-line traffic is not cutting into their circulation.

There's been talk that magazines, freed from the cost of paper and ink, could supply all sorts of "extra" stories for specialists and aficionados.

So far, there's been little of this value-added material.

The single most useful consumer feature for these magazines is the ability to search back issues. You can usually get a listing of articles by key word or topic, as well as the table of contents for particular issues. Most of the magazines have only about a year's worth of archives on-line, but that will obviously change.

The greater promise of on-line journalism is that readers will be able to communicate with editors and reporters. (How much feedback journalists actually want is another matter.)

But for now, what you get in most cases is subscribers talking to one another, or themselves. And unlike a letters-to-the-editor page, where some intelligent life form has culled the most interesting and provocative letters, here you have to click your way through a lot of dross.

According to *Time*'s Elmer-DeWitt, people initially sign on to read the magazine. But what hooks them is the bulletin boards, particularly when they quit "lurking," and exchange their first message.

(Washington Post)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'JERUSALEM, CITY OF PEACE'

Sir, - With a certain astonishment I read your editorial of March 9, "Eight churches vs. Israel." The editorial has not much to do with the text criticized, namely "Jerusalem, city of peace" (An Appeal to President Clinton from Christian Leaders, March 6). After having checked all your editions between March 6 and 9 and not finding the incriminated text, I got the original from the US.

Is it really an act of "antisemitism" if representatives of a large portion of the American electorate, having vested interests in Holy Places in Jerusalem and the Middle East, are pressing their president to go on in the peace process and ask "that in its role as facilitator to the Middle East process, the US government place the question of Jerusalem higher on its agenda"? Is it unfair to say "above all, we ask that the administration uses its influence to prevent this vital issue from being settled by force of events or the creation of facts on the ground. We fear that, if issues centering on Jerusalem are not dealt with openly and directly by all affected parties, they have the potential to derail the peace process?"

Given the outcry all around, are there facts on the ground, as stated by the bishops, or not? Is it "Israel-baiting" to point to things, done by Israel, which are sometimes in blatant contradiction to international law? That other states might also sin is no excuse in itself!

I would like to protest against the last paragraph and especially the last words of this editorial, insulting the pope and the American Churches, if you really mean what you say, i.e. "That they have chosen the path of Israel-baiting, can only lead to the sad conclusion that it is not courage and morality which rule in some of

today's churches," but unprincipled, abject cowardice." I have the feeling that, indeed, it would be an act of "cowardice," if the religious leaders of more than a quarter of the American electorate would abstain from talking freely as American citizens to their freely elected president for fear of not being in harmony with the opinions of, e.g., AIPAC in a matter of serious and international concern. Does this merit "church-baiting," as evidently done in your editorial? It is surely a lack of style!

On March 20, I saw further confusion created by your editorial (see letter of Mr. Morton A. Klein): The purpose of Cardinal Keeler's and the other church leaders' intervention was not to draw attention to the emigration of Christians from the Holy Land, but to ask President Clinton to stop creating facts on the ground, which might endanger the peace process. For Cardinal Keeler, evidently, it is the "Jerusalem Question" as such, which is the focus and not a debate as to why Christians might leave the country. It seems that there is in progress - at least in your newspaper - a sort of "disinformation campaign" by voluntary "side-tracking" from the real issue at stake, i.e. the need to revive "Madrid" and to save the US from losing its role of "honest broker" of lasting Middle East peace settlement.

MSGR. DR. RICHARD MATHES, The Charge of the Holy See Jerusalem.

Unfortunately, the only "facts on the ground" which seem to worry Dr. Mathes (and Cardinal Keeler) are Jewish homes in Jerusalem, whose construction he wrongly describes as a violation of international law. - Ed. J.P.

'WHEN THE MESSIAH COMES'

Sir, - Based upon the following facts, there should be no further consideration of a deal with Syria at this time: Rabin's pre-election vows not to return the Golan to Syria; the problems which have arisen in the Israeli-Palestinian "peace process"; the danger arising from a Syrian-controlled Golan; Assad's repeated failures to adhere to agreements; Syria being the home base for many of the most virulent terrorist organizations; Assad's recent meeting with Mubarak and King Saud in which they invited Saddam Hussein to join them in a new front; the same meeting which caused the Gulf states to abort their budding relationship with Israel. These and many other reasons should impel Israel to cease all negotiations with Syria immediately.

What benefit would accrue to Israel if it gives the Golan to Syria for a piece of paper? The Arabs have now made it abundantly clear that they will not allow any Arab economic interaction with Israel until all problems have been resolved. This means that the Palestinians must be given control of Jerusalem; hundreds of thousands of "refugees" must be returned to Israel; Israel must sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty; Israel must compensate Egypt for the oil which it took from the Sinai, plus any other nonsense which the Arabs can and will concoct.

There is a Jewish expression, "When the Messiah comes," which in simple terms expresses what the Arabs mean when they say all problems must be resolved before they will engage in trade with Israel.

WILLIAM K. LANGFAN Palm Beach, Florida.

مكتبة النور

Mac Haifa reaches Cup quarter-finals

DEREK FATTAL and ORI LEWIS

THE battle for a place in the last eight in soccer's State Cup provided plenty of joy and heartache for fans yesterday.

A crowd of over 26,000 at Ramat Gan's National Stadium saw league champions Maccabi Haifa triumph 2-1 over current cup-holders Maccabi Tel Aviv in a hot-tempered match.

The draw for the quarter-finals will take place on Friday, with the matches due to be played on April 18th.

Maccabi Tel Aviv 1, Maccabi Haifa 2. Tel Aviv captain Nir Klinger was furious with his teammates after the final whistle, as his side went down for the second time this season to the "Green Wave." Despite having the advantage of home turf, the league leaders fell to a side handicapped by the 45th-minute dismissal of Marco Badi.

The hero of the match was Haifa's Sergei Kandaurov who grabbed two vital goals to keep his side on course for the double.

The Tel Avivians started sprightly enough, with Avi Nimni having an early opportunity on goal. Haifa's response came quickly and clinically from an attack led by Eyal Berkovic in the 12th minute. The Haifa midfielder's shot was blocked and fell to Kandaurov who squared the ball into goal.

Tel Aviv's Yuri Shukunov replaced Amit Levy after the resumption. With the loss of Badi for his second booking of the game, the Haifaies battered down the haunches but were unable to prevent Avi Nimni's equalizer in the 57th minute.

Midway through the second period Gadi Bruner wasted a fine chance to take the lead as the Tel Avivians turned on the pressure. In Haifa's next offensive move Kandaurov provided the killer touch that decided the game in the 77th minute.

Hapoel Beersheva 1, Hapoel Eilat 2. Underdogs Kfar Sava provided the surprise of the night coming back from a goal down.

Alon Reef looked to have placed the hosts on the road to victory with a 65th-minute goal, after a pitiful first half. The Kfar Sava fans had other ideas and launched a splendid fight-back. Ophir Ben-Haim began the revival equalizing from within the box in the 74th minute.

Two minutes later the Kfar Sava supporters were cheering again, as Dudi Stolper completed a lightning breakaway attack by beating Shani Smadja in the Beersheba goal.

Hapoel Haifa 3, Hapoel Ramat Gan 0. Second Division Ramat Gan matched its National League rivals for most of the match, forcing the game into extra time, through a mixture of spirited defensive work and quick positive attacking movements.

In the 12th minute of extra time a searching Reuven Ahar pass found Liron Basis in position to open the side's scoring account. Eight minutes later the same combination provided a second goal. With four minutes left, Eilon Aharonoff finished a cunning pass straight to Hisham Zuabi who found the back of the net.

Ironi Ashdod 4, Hapoel Beit She'an 2. Ashdod's new coach Shaye Feigenbaum has a reputation as a sower. The National League's relegation fighters responded to his demands and played like winners. A deadly three-goal barrage in the first half by Alon Mizrahi (12), Ran Haifi (25), and Amir Turjeman (44) rattled Beit She'an.

Although Beit She'an substitute

Itai Mordehai and Argentinean import Claudio Cahimi hit back in the 56th and 70th minutes, a second strike by Ran Haifi in the 73rd minute ensured Ashdod's place in the next round.

Bnei Yehuda 3, Ironi Rishon 1. Netzah Massul set Bnei Yehuda on its way to the quarter-finals when he picked up a ball which rebounded off Rishon keeper Stav Elimelech and shot home from close range.

Michael Jaffe made it 2-0 in the 27th minute from a free kick, before Rishon tried to get back into the match with an Ivan Yermchuk penalty 10 minutes later.

Bnei Yehuda was reduced to 10 men in the 56th minute when Uzi Obayon was given his marching orders.

Sergei Gerasimetz added Bnei Yehuda's third goal in the 67th minute but soon afterwards he missed from the penalty spot when Elimelech managed to dive and push the ball away for a corner.

Mac Netanya 2, Mac Herzliya 1. This match came slightly only well into the second half. Netanya had dominated their opponents early on, although to no avail.

Avishai Janno was shown the red card after the restart but it did not appear to affect the one-way traffic going Netanya's way.

Netanya's Ahmed Aref, who was brought on as substitute for Tal Barak headed in with his first touch of the ball in the 55th minute.

Alex Barneche leveled for Herzliya when he stabbed the ball home from close range in the 55th minute.

With just a minute to go, Jaroslav Aroskevich struck with a solo effort for Netanya, sealing the result.

Hapoel Beersheva 1, Hapoel Eilat 2. Once the Tel Aviv floodgates had been opened, there was no stopping the hosts. But it took them over an hour to break the deadlock.

Yossi Levy was first on the score-sheet for Peah Tikva when he hit a right-foot shot to beat Tel Aviv's giant goalkeeper Jaroslav Baku.

Peah Tikva captain Benny Kozlovski made it 2-0 from the penalty spot 10 minutes later after Yisrael Cohen was felled in the area. Baku was well beaten by Kozlovski's shot.

Peah Tikva's mainstay, French import Carmelo Mishish, put the match out of Tel Aviv's reach in the 83rd minute when he shot from the edge of the area.

Mac PT 0, Bet Jerusalem 1. The two sides failed to impress in the Ramat Gan curtain raiser.

Tomer Azulai headed in the only goal in the 50th minute from a corner taken by Vladimir Greshnevov.

The Ben-Shimon brothers both had chances to score for Peah Tikva late on, Ran hitting the crossbar and Assi crashing the ball into the post, but Betar held onto its slender lead.

SEATTLE (AP) - With its starting point guard on the bench and its greatest coach in the stands, UCLA won its first college basketball championship in 20 years and kept Arkansas from joining the select list of repeaters.

The top-ranked Bruins won their record 11th NCAA title on Monday night with an 89-78 victory that was even more impressive considering senior Tyus Edney was limited to 2 1/2 minutes because of a sprained right wrist.

Ed O'Bannon stepped up as he was supposed to, but so did freshman Toby Bailey and Cameron Dollar, Edney's replacement, and it all meant the first title for the school since 1975, when John Wooden, who sat quietly in the stands of the Kingdome, won the last of 10 in a 12-year span.

As UCLA received the championship trophy, O'Bannon, who was named the most outstanding player in the tournament, turned to the Bruins' fans in the stands, pointed at Edney and shouted: "This is the real MVP right here. He got us here."

The UCLA fans then started chanting, "Tyus! Tyus! Tyus!" For Arkansas, it was the end of a tournament run of close finishes and it ended one game short of becoming the second repeat champion since Wooden's Bruins won seven in a row, ending in 1973.

The Razorbacks had come to rely on its great defense and great player, Corliss Williamson, in the



SPOILS OF VICTORY - Ed O'Bannon cuts the net following Bruins' win.

second half, but neither was there against UCLA.

O'Bannon scored 30 points and had 17 rebounds in a game that

certified his All-America credentials. Bailey, who had struggled to a 1-for-2, two-point outing in the semifinals, finished with 26

points and nine rebounds. And Dollar, the backup point guard who played in the shadow of the lightning quick Edney, came up with eight assists.

Williamson, who was 9-for-12 in the second half of the semifinal win over North Carolina, finished 3-for-16 from the field against the Bruins, including a 1-for-10 effort in the second half. Instead of the Razorbacks swarming and defending as they had all tournament in the latter stages of the game, it was the Bruins who managed to hold Arkansas without a field goal for a 4-7 stretch that ended with Williamson's first basket of the second half with 2:25 to play.

That made it 77-68 and the Razorbacks were out of the last-minute miracles they had managed in the early rounds.

NCAA tournament Most Valuable Players

1939 - None selected
1940 - Marvin Huffman, Indiana
1941 - John Katz, Wisconsin
1942 - Horie Danner, Stanford
1943 - Ken Sellers, Wyoming
1944 - Arnold Patten, Utah
1945 - Bob Kurland, Oklahoma A&M
1946 - Bob Kurland, Oklahoma A&M
1947 - George Kattun, Holy Cross
1948 - Alex Groza, Kentucky
1949 - Alex Groza, Kentucky
1950 - Irvin Dambrot, CUNY
1951 - None selected
1952 - Clyde Lovellette, Kansas
1953 - B.H. Born, Kansas
1954 - Tom Gola, La Salle
1955 - Bill Russell, San Francisco
1956 - Hal Luer, Temple
1957 - Walt Chamberlain, Kansas
1958 - Elgin Baylor, Seattle
1959 - Jerry West, West Virginia
1960 - Jerry Lucas, Ohio State
1961 - Jerry Lucas, Ohio State
1962 - Paul Hogue, Cincinnati
1963 - Art Heyman, Duke
1964 - Walt Hazzard, UCLA
1965 - Bill Bradley, Princeton
1966 - Jerry Chambers, Utah
1967 - Lew Alcindor, UCLA

Arkansas was trying to join Duke in 1991 and 1992 as the only repeat champions since UCLA's streak ended. There have been five other repeaters, Oklahoma State in 1945-46, Kentucky in 1948-49, San Francisco in 1955-56, Cincinnati in 1961-62 and UCLA in 1964-65.

Arkansas (32-7)
Thurman 2-0 0-0, Williamson 3-16 5-16, Martin 1-2 0-0, Michael 5-10 3-16, Smith 4-12 11, Stewart 5-10 1-12, Dillard 2-4 0-6, Robinson 2-3 0-4, Ramez 1-1 0-0, Williams 3-4 1-7, Williams 0-0 0-0, Garrett 0-0 0-0, Smith 2-5 0-5 12-20.
UCLA (51-2)
C.O'Bannon 4-10 5-11, E.O'Bannon 10-21 8-11, Zidek 5-8 4-7 14, Edney 0-0 0-0, Bailey 2-20 1-22, Dollar 1-4 4-8, Henderson 1-5 6-9, Totals 53-88 21-29 81.
3-Point goals - Arkansas 10-28 (McDonald 5-7, Book 2-3, Dillard 2-3, Martin 1-2, Stewart 1-4, Thurman 1-7, Robinson 0-1), UCLA 2-7 (Bailey 1-2, E.O'Bannon 1-4, Dollar 0-0, Fatted out McDonald, Rebounds - Arkansas 31 (Stewart 11, Williamson 10, UCLA 21, Dollar 8, Total fouls - Arkansas 22, UCLA 15, A - 32,540.

1968 - Lew Alcindor, UCLA
1969 - Lew Alcindor, UCLA
1970 - Sidney Wicks, UCLA
1971 - Howard Porter of Villanova was selected MVP but was later ruled ineligible.
1972 - Bill Walton, UCLA
1973 - Bill Walton, UCLA
1974 - David Thompson, North Carolina State
1975 - Richard Washington, UCLA
1976 - Kent Benson, Indiana
1977 - Butch Lee, Marquette
1978 - Jack Givens, Kentucky
1979 - Jerry Johnson, Michigan State
1980 - Darrell Griffith, Louisville
1981 - Isaiah Thomas, Indiana
1982 - James Worthy, North Carolina
1983 - Akeem Olatunji, Houston
1984 - Patrick Ewing, Georgetown
1985 - Ed Pinckney, Villanova
1986 - Steve Nash, Arizona
1987 - Keith Smart, Indiana
1988 - Danny Manning, Kansas
1989 - Allen Iverson, Michigan
1990 - Anderson Hunt, UNLV
1991 - Christian Laettner, Duke
1992 - Bobby Hurley, Duke
1993 - Donald Williams, North Carolina
1994 - Corliss Williamson, Arkansas
1995 - Ed O'Bannon, UCLA

Baseball owners denied stay of injunction

Fans threaten boycotts, demos

NEW YORK (AP) - The 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals yesterday denied the request by baseball owners to stay the injunction issued against them last week, clearing the way for the season to start April 26.

The three-judge panel battered management lawyer Frank Casey during a one-hour hearing, accusing him of faulty legal strategy and trying to confuse the court with doubletalk.

The appeals court let stand the injunction issued Friday by US District Judge Sonia Sotomayor until the 2nd Circuit hears an appeal during the first half of May. There is little likelihood the injunction will be overturned.

Meanwhile, across the nation, fans are bristling at the way they've been treated during the strike. And some are fighting back.

Some are planning to boycott games or stage demonstrations once the major leagues return, others plan to boycott commercial sponsors of major league baseball or television stations that broadcast replacement games.

"Fans are organizing. We shouldn't be taken for granted,"

said Ed Bunker, founder of Fan Out America, a Baltimore-based group of about 250 baseball fans. Fan Out America is urging fans nationwide to boycott baseball for at least a week once the major leagues return.

In Palmdale, a suburb of Los Angeles, a group called Fowl Tip is organizing a demonstration for the first game major leagues return. The group wants fans to party in the parking lot instead of going inside to watch the game.

"Our ultimate goal is to have enough people to surround Dodger Stadium outside and do the wave," said Roberta Rothwell, the group's organizer.

Then, for the ultimate insult, she wants the fans to leave the parking lots during the seventh-inning stretch, just as the players walked out in the middle of last season.

A group of fans in Omaha has a different strategy to get attention: hit baseball sponsors in the pocket book.

The group, called The Fans Response, is organizing a boycott of the sponsors of major league baseball, such as Anheuser-Busch, Nike and Rawlings.

Paris fancies chances against Milan

Bayern underdog in European Cup battle against Ajax

PARIS (Reuters) - After knocking out last year's losing finalists Barcelona, ambitious Paris St Germain aims to topple holders AC Milan to reach its first European Cup final.

The French champions, semifinalists in the UEFA Cup and Cup Winners' Cup in the last two seasons, aim to go one step further and become the fourth French club to reach the final of Europe's leading club competition after Reims, St Etienne and Marseille.

"The European Cup is our only goal," Milan striker Dejan Savicevic said after Saturday's 2-0 defeat by leaders Juventus killed off its Italian title ambitions.

"We're the clear favorites because we are far more experienced."

In the other semifinal, injuries to key players and

indifferent league form have left Bayern Munich facing a mammoth task against Ajax of Amsterdam.

Captain Lothar Matthaus and French striker Jean-Pierre Papin are long-term casualties but Bulgarian international Emil Kostadinov has just been sidelined for six weeks with knee ligament damage.

The result is that Bayern, currently sixth in the Bundesliga, is a team which works hard but has little international class. It goes into the game as a firm underdog.

By contrast, the strong Ajax team is a blend of youth, enthusiasm and experience, unbeaten in 27 league games and currently five points clear at the top of the Dutch table.

Both clubs have a glorious past in European play. They dominated the European Cup for six straight seasons winning it between them from 1971 to 1976.

Price pursues 3rd straight golf major

AUGUSTA, Georgia (Reuters) - Nick Price pursues a prize that would put him in the rarest of company when he joins a select field of 87 players for the Masters Tournament starting tomorrow.

Price, last year's player of the year after posting seven tournament wins, can join Ben Hogan as the only professional to capture three successive major championships with a victory at the Augusta National Golf Club. Hogan won the Masters and the

US and British Opens in 1953. The 39-year-old Zimbabwean, however, faces an array of worthy challengers among the rest of golf's successful international stars.

Price won the last two majors - the British Open and PGA Championship - and surely knows how to score here. His brilliant 63 at the 1986 Masters remains the tourney record.

Defending champion Jose Maria Olazabal of Spain, whose vic-

tory last year was the sixth by a European player in the last seven Masters, is hobbled by recent surgery on his right foot.

Stepping lively this year among foreign players are two-time winner Nick Faldo of Britain, Australians Greg Norman and Steve Elkington, Vijay Singh of Fiji, US Open champion Ernie Els of South Africa, Spaniard Seve Ballesteros, Briton Colin Montgomerie and Americans Fred Couples and Paul Azinger.

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Billion-shekel plan to grow citrus in Negev

ISRAELI farmers will, for the first time, begin growing citrus fruit and olives in the Negev, under a new scheme launched by the JNF and the Agriculture Ministry.

The one-billion shekel plan envisions bringing large quantities of water and topsoil to the arid, saline area over the next three years, to prepare it for agriculture, JNF Chairman Moshe Rivlin said yesterday. Work has already begun on the infrastructure for hothouses and orchards and the first seeds are expected to be planted in November, he said.

Large tracts of land will be turned into "hothouse parks" where farmers will rent the hothouses on an annual basis. The crops in the south tend to ripen early and are expected to be competitive on the European markets. Some 4,000 dunams of agricultural land will be prepared this year but the eventual goal is to reach 100,000 dunams, Rivlin said. A large 5,000-dunam olive forest will be planted in the cen-

BATSHEVA TSUR

tral Negev near Revivim and Ma-shabei Sadeh.

Recycled water will be brought from the Dan region, and dams and reservoirs will also be constructed. Three large citrus firms have already expressed interest, Rivlin said, since orchards in the central region of the country have, over the past few years, been turned over to contractors for building sites and highways and the citrus industry has consequently diminished.

Despite the extensive agricultural programs, there will still be plenty of desert scenery left untouched since the desert area of Israel covers 11 million dunams, he stressed.

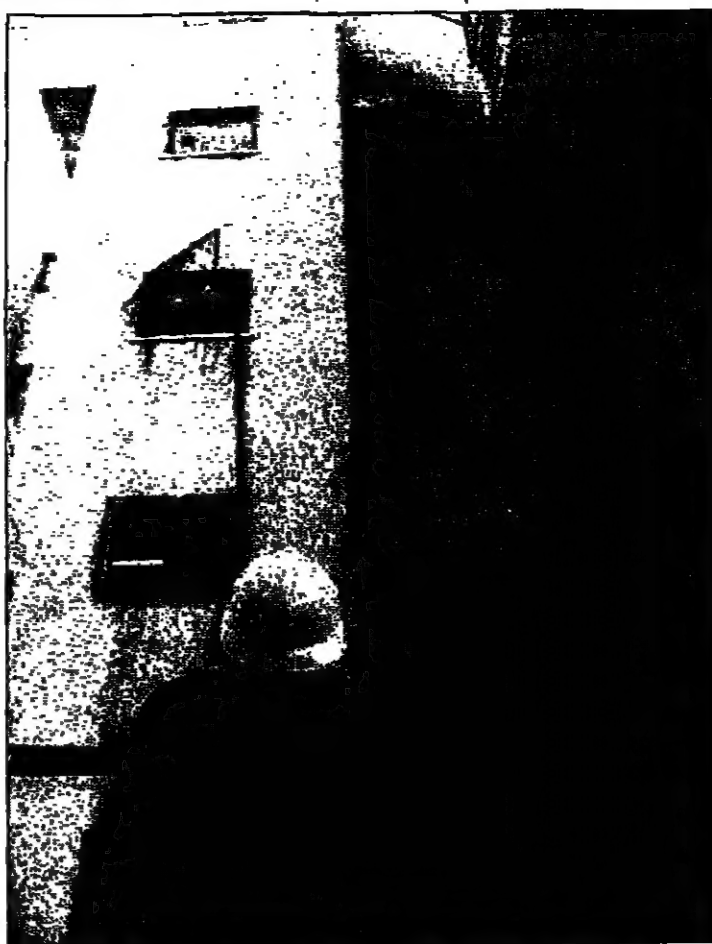
The regional councils in the Negev will all participate in the plan. At the same time, Jordan is being consulted about all plans affecting the Arava. A large reservoir is being planned in coordination with the Jordanians at Neot Hakikar, and Jordan is ex-

pected to participate in the second three-week seminar on rolling back the desert to be held here in November.

Rivlin expressed satisfaction that Egyptian experts are participating in the steering committee for the seminar which will attract 40 countries.

Another innovative feature of the plan is the construction of hothouses to cover fishponds in the Arava, a project which has already proved most successful in the northern Negev, where such ponds have yields at least 10 times larger than those from the regular fishponds in other parts of the country. The fishing industry will be earmarked for export, Rivlin said.

At the same time, tourism projects around the existing parks in the south as well as new projects under development will be boosted. The Golan Park, for example, which was heavily hit by this winter's floods, is being fixed up in time for the Pessach holidays, he said.



A fireman checks the scene in Bnei Brak where two young children were seriously injured in a blaze yesterday. (Alon Ron/Israel Sun)

Fire chief denies slow response in Bnei Brak blaze

RAINE MARCUS

THE Fire and Rescue Service chief last night denied that firefighters were slow in extinguishing a blaze in Bnei Brak yesterday morning, which left a two-year-old baby boy and his five-year-old sister seriously injured.

Residents of the street where the fire occurred accused firefighters of arriving late and failing to enter the blazing apartment on time.

The children were still in critical condition last night in Petah Tikva's Bellinson Hospital.

A resident of the city said yesterday that although she had shown firefighters the way to Elimelech Street, she noticed they were still looking for the scene of the fire some 25 minutes later.

But Fire Service Chief Efraim Ma'aravi rejected outright her accusations following a preliminary investigation.

"We concluded that firefighters behaved according to regulations," Ma'aravi said yesterday.

The investigation, he said, revealed that fire and rescue teams arrived on time and worked quickly to put out the blaze — caused by a short circuit of a faulty light fitting — and evacuate the children.

"Firefighters risked their own lives to save the children," said Ma'aravi. Initially neighbors had told them that five children were trapped in a specific room but when firefighters entered there was no one there, he added.

The two children were found unconscious in an adjoining room, and were rushed by Magen David Adom to Bellinson Hospital where they were given artificial respiration.

A firefighter was also treated for mild smoke inhalation injuries.

The fire broke out yesterday morning at the second story apartment of the Bogum family while the parents were not at home. Their 15-year-old daughter was left in charge of three of their 11 children while the mother was out.

Ben-Porat seeks removal of 'Mabat Sheni' editor

EVELYN GORDON

THE Israel Broadcasting Authority should consider firing Michael Karpin, editor of its *Mabat Sheni* program, because of his tendentious program against the state comptroller, State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat said yesterday.

The program, which aired three weeks ago, was devoted entirely to interviewing people dissatisfied with Ben-Porat's work.

Ben-Porat, speaking at a meeting of the Knesset State Control Committee, said that even more serious than the program's tendentiousness was the fact that Karpin had lied to his viewers, denying that he had been reprimanded by the IBA as a result of her findings.

After investigating a complaint against Karpin, Ben-Porat found that he had improperly given air time to an organization in exchange for the group flying him to the US.

Committee chairman David Magen (Likud) said it was a violation of journalistic ethics for Karpin to have produced the program at all, given his personal gripe against the comptroller. If the IBA does not draw the proper conclusions, he said, he will ask Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair to intervene.

However, committee members Dan Tichon (Likud), Ra'anan Cohen (Labor) and Arye Gamliel (Shas) said it would be better to stop at asking the IBA to take action, even though the program had clearly been an attempt to destroy the comptroller's reputation and prestige.

IBA director-general Motti Kirschbaum insisted that the IBA found out about the reprimand Karpin had received only at the last minute — though it had been issued by the IBA.

Court petitioned to allow ex-Kach members in Knesset

EVELYN GORDON

FORMER Kach members should not be forbidden to enter the Knesset, MK Shaul Guttman (Moledet) demanded in a petition to the High Court of Justice yesterday.

Guttman had invited a number of former Kach members to his Knesset office on March 13, but Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss refused to let them in unless they would allow him to examine their criminal records. The group refused.

In the petition, Guttman noted that numerous "security risks" — including other former Kach members and even four convicted Palestinian ter-

rorists — have been allowed to enter the Knesset in the past without such restrictions.

Weiss's claim that they represent a security threat — the only legal excuse for barring them — and his demand to examine their criminal records was therefore not meant to maintain order but as a form of censorship, he charged.

Guttman said he invited the group because they had been administrative detainees — an issue in which he is interested. By preventing them from entering, he said, Weiss was interfering with his work as an MK.

KNESSET BRIEFS

Drunk-driving law passed

Someone convicted of drunk driving would automatically lose his license for two years, according to a law passed by the Knesset yesterday. The law was sponsored by Shaul Amur and Avraham Herschson (Likud).

'Denver Boot' outlawed

Use of the "Denver boot" would be outlawed, except in certain circumstances, according to a law passed by the Knesset yesterday. The exceptions are for offenses such as parking in a spot reserved for the handicapped.

Moral-crime bill passes committee

An MK convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude and given a prison sentence would be thrown out of the Knesset, according to a bill approved by the House Committee yesterday. The bill, by committee chairman Hagai Merom (Labor) and Law Committee chairman Dedi Zucker (Meretz), will now be sent to the plenum for its second and third readings.

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